



**Action Minutes
Design Commission
Tuesday December 22, 2020**

**Special Public Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting**

For a complete and detailed recap of the meeting, please log to:
<https://www.cityofpasadena.net/commissions/audio-video-recordings/>

1. **ROLL CALL** – Vice Chair Rao called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
Present: Commissioners Barar, Chiao, Potter, Rao, Sales, Sepulveda, and Toro
Absent: Commissioner Carpenter
Staff: Leon White, Kevin Johnson, and Amanda Landry
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** –
Motion to approve minutes for **November 17, 2020**, were moved and seconded by Commissioners Sales and Chiao, however, current members were not present for that meeting therefore, there was no quorum to approve the minutes. Minutes were continued to the next meeting.
3. **ADVISORY REVIEW**
 - A. **LINCOLN AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN REQUEST FOR COMMENTS**
Commission review of draft design and development standards and guidelines, on the specifics of the Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan, as part of the third round community engagement process. Feedback received from the Design Commission will inform the preparation of the plans that will be presented later to the Planning Commission and City Council.

(Case Planner: D. Sanchez)
4. **PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION**
 - A. **350 CORDOVA ST (COUNCIL DISTRICT 6) –CONTINUED FROM 12/8/2020 DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT FOR THIS ITEM**
Demolition of existing office buildings and new construction of a new three-to four-story, 83,027-square-foot, 84-unit multi-family residential project in three buildings over one level of subterranean parking.

(Case Planner: Kevin Johnson)
Owner/Applicant: Euclid Cordova Associates, LLC
Architect: Onyx Architects

Public Comments: John Latta, Megan Foker, Erica Foy, and Richard Luczski

Commission Comments:

- Further study the parking layout and site design and consider pursuing reductions in required parking to allow for preservation of more of the site's significant protected tree canopy within the site interior.
- In future submittals, ensure that the DBH of multi-trunk trees is calculated as required in the Tree Protection Ordinance (based on the combined areas of the trunks) to ensure accurate accounting of protected trees.
- Ensure that the analysis and reasoning for the proposed tree removals is made clear in future applications.
- Further study the massing of the buildings to create a clear hierarchy, harmonious proportions and a differentiated base, middle and top. Along the long Euclid Avenue and courtyard elevations, explore further articulation of the massing, and possible further separation of buildings, to create distinct building forms to form a streetscape.
- Consider alternative means of organizing the proposed residential units on the site including arranging them around multiple courtyards and/or incorporating units that have a north-south orientation rather than all units being oriented east-west.
- Explore ways to impart some playfulness into the design, such as angular shifts to create differentiated massing.
- Further study the fenestration to create more balanced solid-to-void proportions, a clear pattern of openings and avoid short, rectangular windows along the street façade.
- Explore ways to create a stronger, more expressive roofline to the buildings.
- Further study the stoops along Euclid Avenue to ensure they are usable spaces and integrated into the design of the building.
- Consider providing a cover at the entrances to further differentiate the base of the building, create a transitional element from the exterior to the interior and provide shelter from the elements.
- Reconsider the extensive walkways and bridges within and along the main garden to avoid creation of physical and visual barriers to the main garden from the street and adjoining residential units. These features should be buried within the building as much as possible.
- The pedestrian path of travel from the parking structure to the residential units should engage the courtyard rather than bypassing it. The elevators that extend from the parking structure to the main garden area should terminate at the ground level.
- The stairs and elevators within the main garden should be designed as terminating and transitional elements that are architecturally compatible to and of similar quality as the buildings and should be integrated into the residential buildings themselves. If these features are removed or relocated, consider additional means of providing terminating and transitional elements within the main garden.
- The long central courtyard should be designed to include discreet areas and appropriately proportioned outdoor rooms that provide a variety of uses and amenities to ensure usability of the project's open spaces, while ensuring that the spaces are not over-programmed.
- Carefully study the design of the open spaces to include such features as outdoor cooking/eating space, water and/or fire features, site furniture, focal elements, etc. Specialty paving should be used to soften the walkways and gathering spaces.
- Restudy the oblique angles in the landscape design to ensure that the open spaces created are useful, meaningful spaces.
- Further study the articulation of the proposed architectural style to develop a clear hierarchy, unify the design overall and avoid creation of a single building with multiple, disconnected styles.
- In addition, further study the project's response to Pasadena's architectural heritage, including historically significant modern designs in the vicinity. For Concept Design Review, explain why the chosen style is appropriate and provides real benefits to the City.
- Further study how the landscape design and the building design can be more integrated and interconnected and address the design issues with both aspects of the design, as outlined in these comments.

- Explore ways to celebrate the main entry along Euclid Avenue, particularly in response to the proposed preservation of protected trees at that location.
- Consider relocating bicycle storage from the basement.
- Ensure that future drawing submitted are clear and legible.
- Consider whether isolating the community use at the corner is creating limitations and restrictions on the design.
- Provide block diagram covering the entire city block facing Euclid, and contextual photo/renderings of buildings along Euclid.

5. CONCEPT DESIGN REVIEW

A. 139 S. OAK KNOLL AVE – (COUNCIL DISTRICT 7)

New construction of a four-story, 17-unit multi-family apartment building with approximately 21,334 square feet of gross floor area and one subterranean parking level with 20 parking spaces.

(Case Planner: R. Pelayo/A. Landry)

Owner/Applicant: Nor Brand III, LLC/Missak Balian

Architect: Onyx Architects

Public Comments: Joe DiMassa, Carol Hoffman, Richard Luczynski, Ashwini Lal, Reiko Aoo, Andrew Salimian, and Maritza Torres

Commission Comments:

- The applicant should address all of staff's proposed conditions of approval with illustrated exhibits and narratives.
- The architectural style and detailing shall be further refined to more closely reference the design inspiration. The following issues shall specifically be addressed:
 - Re-examine the orientation and resolution of the entryway and the enhanced style of the street facing facades.
 - Explore the relationship between the chosen architectural style and massing and further explain the strong sense of symmetry that has been incorporated into the facades rather than an asymmetrical composition. Based on the precedent images there is a certain level of asymmetry that should be further explored over the main point of entry, or consider bringing the entry to the other street facing elevation.
 - The use of the cast stone detailing should be further refined and generally be treated more delicately. Where and how it is currently proposed appears overbearing and very heavy. Consider pulling back on the use of this detail in an appropriate manner consistent with the inspiration imagery.
 - The color and material palette should be further refined. Introduce historically appropriate differentiation between textures and materials. The color of the stucco is too similar to the cast stone detailing at this time.
- The massing and organization of the proposed design shall be reconsidered.
 - The long expanses of flat roof with the trellis appears too massive. Explore a more elegant roof form.
 - Re-study the rooftop elements and try to develop a more interesting roofline that can satisfy the height averaging requirements.
 - The parapet shall be revised, to appear more consistent with the precedent images.
 - Explore introducing additional balconies on the west elevation to more appropriately transition from the adjacent lower scaled development.

Motion:

Motion made to continue this item to 2/9/2021. Moved and seconded by Commissioners Sales and Barar.

AYES: Commissioners Barar, Potter, Rao, Sales, Sepulveda, and Toro
NOES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Carpenter
ABSTAIN: Commissioner Chiao
APPROVED: 6-0-1

B. 150 S. OAK KNOLL AVE – (COUNCIL DISTRICT 7)

New construction of a 4-story, 19-unit multi-family apartment building with approximately 24,502 square feet of gross floor area and a subterranean parking level with 25 parking spaces.

(Case Planner: R. Pelayo/A. Landry)

Owner/Applicant: Nor Brand III, LLC/Missak Balian

Architect: Onyx Architects

Public Comments: Damien Evans, Maritza Torres, Maya Guice, and Maria Paula Ruiz

Commission Comments:

- Combine or simplify the configuration of walkways that connect the sidewalk to the main building entry and to the residential units fronting the street. In addition, provide additional landscaping and permanent amenities that can potentially activate the front garden spaces.
- Modify the trellis designs on the fourth floor level and roof so that they are well integrated to overall development. In addition, explore alternative trellis designs that can provide protection from the elements so that the terraces can be used year-round.
- The plans submitted for Final Design Review shall include product specifications and clearly depict all of the proposed permanent amenities within the roof terraces, courtyard, and communal balconies.
- Refine the configuration, materials, colors, and finishes of the courtyard planters and walkway walls to enhance their connection with the street level and to express the high-quality design of the building.
- The east and south building elevations shall receive the same level of roof height variation and dimensionality as depicted on the north and west elevations in order to maintain a harmonious design on all sides of the building.
- Submit revised landscape plans for Final Design Review, clearly indicating the locations of planting species, a legend, general dimensions of landscaped and hardscape areas, and photographs of the proposed landscape species.
- The applicant shall include an illustrated written response to each condition of approval associated with Concept Design Review. Brief written responses without accompanying diagrams are not acceptable.
- The project features and actions indicated on the plans demonstrating consistency with the City of Pasadena Climate Action Plan shall be clearly incorporated into and shown on the plans submitted for Final Design Review.
- The project shall comply with the conditions provided by the Departments of Public Works (dated June 26, 2020) and Transportation (dated April 17, 2020), included in this report as Attachments B and C, to the satisfaction of said departments. The plans submitted for Final Design Review shall also be re-routed to City Departments and revised conditions, if any, shall be incorporated into the conditions of approval for Final Design Review.
- Vents and drainage appurtenances shall be not be located on the street facing elevation and should be routed through the roof to the greatest extent possible.
- The blade-like wall supports for the balconies shall be further refined with respect to materiality and massing and termination into other adjacent surfaces in the Final Design Review submittal.

Motion:

Moved and seconded by Commissioners Sales and Potter.

AYES: Commissioners Barar, Potter, Rao, Sales, Sepulveda, and Toro

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Carpenter

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Chiao

APPROVED: 6-0-1

6. **COMMENTS AND REPORTS FROM STAFF – No Report**
7. **COMMENTS AND REPORTS FROM COMMISSION – No Report**
8. **COMMENTS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**
 - A. **SELECT COMMISSIONERS TO FILL SUBCOMMITTEE VACANCIES**

Moved to next meeting

 1. **Urban Forestry Advisory Committee - (TBD, Carpenter) No Report**
 2. **Historic Preservation Commission - (Potter) No Report**
 3. **Planning Commission - (Barar) No Report**
 4. **Transportation Advisory Commission - (Sales) No Report**
 5. **Arts & Culture Commission - (Sepulveda) No Report**
 6. **Concept Design Review Application Subcommittee - (TBD, Toro) No Report**
 7. **Las Encinas Psychiatric Hospital & Barn Subcommittee - (Carpenter, TBD) No Report**
 8. **Specific Plan Implementation Process Subcommittee - (TBD, Rao, TBD) No Report**
 9. **100 West Walnut St. Subcommittee (PARSONS) - (Toro, Chiao, TBD)**
 - Memo sent to commission for review
 10. **Olivewood (North and South) Subcommittee - (TBD, Chiao, TBD) No Report**
 11. **130-140 N. Fair Oaks Avenue Subcommittee - (TBD, TBD, TBD) No Report**
 12. **3200 East Foothill Boulevard (SpaceBank) - (Chiao, TBD) No Report**
 13. **1539 East Howard St. (EF Academy) – (Toro, Chiao, TBD) No Report**
 14. **Design Awards Subcommittee – (TBD, TBD) No Report**
9. **ADJOURNMENT – Vice Chair Rao adjourned the meeting at 10:10 p.m.**



Leon White, Principal Planner



Michi Takeda, Recording Secretary